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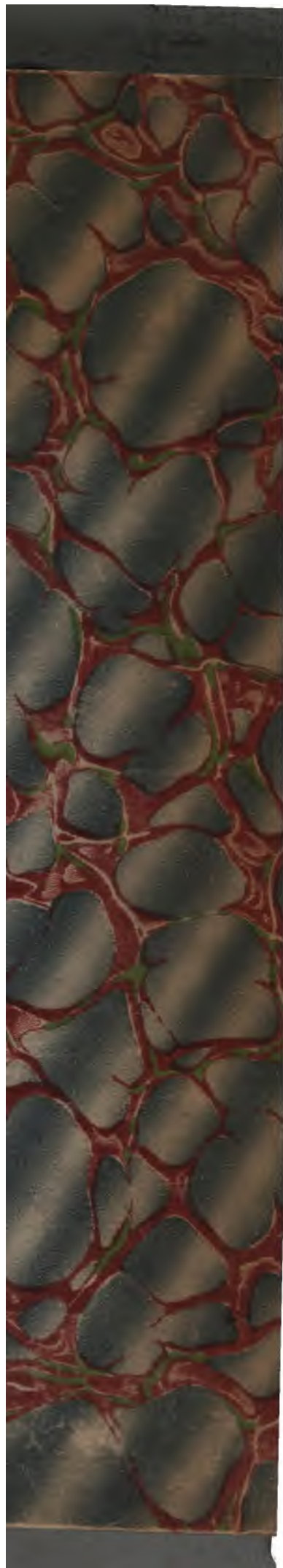
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BETTY ALLEN

AND

HER SIX SOLDIER SONS

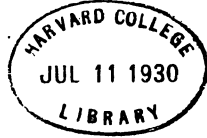
By

MARY A. H. EMERSON

(*Mrs. B. K. Emerson*)

A PAPER READ AT THE CHARTER MEETING OF THE BETTY ALLEN CHAPTER OF THE
DAUGHTERS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION, HELD AT NORTHAMPTON,
MASS., NOVEMBER 21, 1896.

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Bright fund

BETTY ALLEN

ONE HUNDRED and sixty-three years ago to-morrow,* in the old Parsons house, still standing on South Street, beneath one of our most beautiful elms, festivity reigned, as Elizabeth Parsons, a daughter of the house, was united in marriage to Joseph Allen. Elizabeth was a daughter of Noah and Mindwell (Edwards) Parsons, and was seventeen years old at her marriage, the bridegroom being twenty-one, and the officiating clergyman, Rev. Jonathan Edwards, about thirty.

There was probably a numerous gathering of relatives and friends, and a jovial occasion, for "the oldest inhabitant" would certainly find it difficult to recall a wedding in the Parsons family, in Northampton, otherwise conducted, and doubtless the precedent has been handed down from the generations of a past century.

Mr. Allen took his bride thence to the home on King Street, now standing between the new and the old entrances to Edwards Street.

This for nearly sixty-six years was the home of Betty Allen. (She died at the home of her daughter, the next house south.) Her many descendants through five generations have revered her name and her memory is now and, as I hope to show, not inappropriately, freshly honored by the adoption of her name by the Northampton chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution.

Truly Betty was one of the stanch *mothers* of the American Revolution.

How appalled the girlish bride of the 22nd of November, 1733, would have been could she have foreseen that she was to rear a family

* This paper was first read at the Charter meeting of the Betty Allen Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution, held at Northampton, Mass., November 21, 1896.

of twelve children—each with a good pious Bible name!—and was to provide six stalwart sons for her country's service in the war for independence from Great Britain.

So it was to be, and *Betty Allen and her Six Soldier Sons* is my theme to-day.

Legend gives meagre detail of Betty's life. What need?

She bore, and nursed, and reared, and trained, and taught and washed, and dressed, and presumably spanked her eight boys and four girls, and, with God's help, made decent men and women of them, and lived to give back several of them, after honored and useful lives, to the God who had confided them to her tutelage.

A busy mother's life! Perhaps the purest and happiest our earthly state allows. At least such seem the ones with which Satan finds the smallest opportunity to tamper.

Is there any surer amulet against evil spirits than a clinging baby-hand?

A *broad-minded* as well as *pure-minded* woman Betty must have been. A wide field had she for the practical use of every bit of knowledge and diplomacy which she could acquire, and for all the ethics and metaphysics the Rev. Jonathan Edwards could teach her.

"By their fruits ye shall know them." Betty must have been strong, physically, mentally, and morally. Not *too* serious, or conscientious, else she would all too soon have burned out the vital flame—a sweet-tempered, bustling, gossipy body—a gossip I know she was in the good sense of the word.

Small talk! She had an endless amount of that at her command. Very small, oftentimes, for how could anything else find place between the wailings, and frettings, and merry-makings, and cooings of little Joseph, and Jonathan, and Sarah, and Elizabeth, and Thomas, and Phinehas, and Moses, and Solomon, and Elisha, and Elijah, and Eunice?

The church books record that she assisted at the births of three thousand infants,—and think of all the hours of cheery small talk, in diverting and thus alleviating pains and anxieties, that meant! to say nothing of the heroic endurance entailed in witnessing the sufferings of others. What an inestimable neighbor she must have been!

She undoubtedly had failings—I know she scolded—severely too sometimes, else Jonathan and Thomas and Moses had never been so sturdy in the face of the enemy.

She was a staunch friend of the Rev. Jonathan Edwards through all the troublous times that finally effected his removal from Northampton.

Joseph Allen was one of the nineteen friends of Mr. Edwards who were true to the last and Betty was her husband's able supporter.

Of her *faith* we have testimony:

Mr. Allen's uncle, Mr. Thomas Allen, who died in 1754, bequeathed a sum of money to his grand-nephew Thomas to defray the expenses of his education. The will was contested and the case tried in Boston, Joseph Allen pleading his son's cause.

On the day of the trial, Betty Allen sent for her mother Mrs. Parsons, of South Street, to come over and see her.

Betty's sway extended to the generation behind, as well as before her, for the mother came, obediently, though with the mild reproof, "Well Betty why have you sent for me? You know I am feeble."

Betty replied "Mother that case is to be tried in Boston to-day, and I have sent for you to come and spend the day with me in prayer in my chamber." And the prayers of the righteous women availed much. The case was decided in his favor, and the boy Thomas received a university education at Harvard, and was counted one of the best classical scholars. Later he became the first minister of Pittsfield, and is known to history as the "fighting parson of Bennington."

Look reverently on the old homestead in its present humiliation, ye daughters of the American Revolution, whose rallying cry is "Betty Allen."

In its upper chambers before the battles of the Revolution were fought, the importunings of a mother's heart wrested from Supernal Powers the strength that was to be needed by her sons in the trying days of war.

The faith that inspired the Berkshire men at Bennington, the integrity that insured André's captivity, and caused Benedict Arnold to flee the country, the manly tenderness that prompted the prisoner, enduring such miseries on a British prison ship as to drive him later to risk and to suffer death in an attempt to escape, to send cheerful letters and considerate counsel to the young wife from whom he was separated—were inculcated and nurtured beneath that roof-tree.

It stands dilapidated now, but many of us remember when it was still a pleasant home, with its latticed piazza along two sides, and shaded by large hemlock trees.

Dr. Barrett lived there after his marriage, and Madame Dwight and there Miss Margarette Dwight first opened her afterward famous boarding school.

There Rev. Samuel Hopkins married his beautiful bride of eighteen, Miss Caroline Dwight.

Another wedding, which some still remember as occurring there, was that of Miss Watson to Augustus Clarke.

More recently Mr. Oscar Edwards, and Mr. John W. Wilson resided there.

It is a roomy rambling, interesting house, full of associations for all connected with those families, and its decay gives a heart-twinge to some even, whose memory stops short of half a century.

Betty Allen's descendants have been numerous, and "seeking first the kingdom of God" they have had many of the good things of this world "added unto them."

In the lines of theology, law, missionary work, education, literature, art and business, they have been known and honored throughout the land,

and those individuals whose "lines have fallen" in the quiet places of earth, have been prosperous and reliable citizens.

Of Betty's sons two were Chaplains, two Majors, and one a Lieutenant in the Continental army.

With three of them their war records were mere episodes in long, useful and distinguished lives. I confine myself to-day almost wholly to these records.

Of *Joseph*, the eldest son, I find little,—two items only.

He was a Lieutenant, and at Bennington with his brother Thomas, loading the gun tradition saith, for the Parson to fire:—and this notice read in church, during the war:

"Joseph Allin, Junr., desires that thanks may be given to god for his goodness to him in Keeping and preserving him through the fight at Ticonderogge and through the daingers of Sicknefs in the Late Campain and in Returning him home again he desires prayers that he may Live Anfwerable to So great a mercy his Payrents Desire to join with him."

Jonathan Allen, the second child, bore the rank of Major through the war and made an honorable record. After escaping the perils of army life, he was accidentally and fatally shot while hunting, by his companion, Mr. Seth Lyman, in the woods at the foot of Round Hill, near what is now Bright Street.

Moses, the seventh child of Joseph and Betty Allen, was a chaplain in the army. He graduated at Princeton and was settled as a minister at Midway, Georgia.

His society was dispersed and "meeting-house" burned by the British Army from Florida, under General Prevost in 1778. In December, when Savannah was reduced by the British troops, he was taken prisoner.

While the Continental officers were generally paroled, exception was made of Chaplain Allen, as his exhortations from the pulpit and his animated exertions in the field exposed him to the particular resentment of the British. He was confined for some weeks on board a prison ship under peculiarly loathsome circumstances.

Seeing no prospect of relief he attempted the recovery of his liberty—by throwing himself overboard in the hope of swimming to an adjacent point, but was drowned in the attempt, February 8, 1779, aged thirty years.

His body was washed onto a neighboring island, and found by some of his friends. They requested of the captain of a British vessel some boards of which to make him a coffin, but were refused.

Papers found in his pocket after the drowning are still extant, and I quote from scraps of a diary, torn, water-soaked, and partially obliterated.

" 29th December, 1778. Tuesday.

A Battle at Savannah & the town taken by y^e Englifh. No. loft not known.

30th. Between three & four hundred prifoners fhut up in y^e State houfe.

31ft. Citizens & foldiers drove into a prifon fhifp, no diftinction between y^e Gentlemen of property, & a rafkal at the——

Jan'y. 1ft:—Officers allowed their Parole, Chaplain excepted. Parole figned by all except the chaplain, & he ordered to the common jail.

2d. Ordered on board y^e Ship *Nancy* a prifon fhifp. It is a happinefs that Mr. Sheftall¹ is a fellow fufferer, he bears it with fuch fortitude as is an example to me. His cafe is peculiarly hard, & his fon fuffers with him. The Cap'n feems willing to ferve us gives us A room between the Cabbin & y^e fteerage. We are thankful for the diftinction made between us &—

3rd. Sunday.

Our allowance, three gills of rice & eleven ounces of beef per four & twenty hours. Some officers on board fpoke illnatured things of Mr. Sheftall the Cap'n ordered us out of the fteerage into y^e hole with y^e common prifoners.

A man dead on board the Chaplain not allowed to bury him.

¹ Mordecai Sheftall, (1735-1797) was one of the prominent Jewish citizens of Savannah, and held the office of Deputy Commissary of Issues in the army. His patriotism led to being described by the British as "a very great rebel."

He had two sons, Mordecai Jr., a physician, member of the Georgia Legislature and Judge of County Court, and Sheftall, who was imprisoned with his father. See Jewish Cyclopedia and White's *Historical Collections of Georgia*.

4th. Nothing particular. I pity Mr. Bryan.

5th. Cap'n of transport called to Agent——.

The question asked the Cap'n of the *Nancy* (Tate) by y^e Agent Noles. Have you a Parfon Allen on board?

Yes. *Take care of him* he's y^e dammedest rebel upon the continent.

Poor consolation for a man in distrefs & denied a hearing.

6th. Ordered to Cockspur.² A man dead on board. The Lieut. of y^e *Vigilant* forbid y^e Chaplain's burying him.

7th. Head wind—move but little to-day. Got down to tybe³—buried another.

Here the daily record is broken and the next words legible are:

“——Jail fix days for faying that Parfon Allen was ufed very ill at the time of captivity.

29th. (Jan.) A corps buried. Seven dead fince we went on board. Went on board y^e *Whitby*.

30th. A Bit of pork for dinner. The Jews Mr. Sheftall & fon refused to eat their pieces, & their knives and forks were ordered to be greafed with it.

31ft. Sergt. Bond came aboard. They have loft five men belonging to the *Vigilant*.

—— News by a Woman that Col. Brown is not killed, but his arm wounded & cut off. 17 men of his killed in the action at the time he was wounded—that the enemies Light Infantry were all killed & taken on Sunday laft at Briar Creek, &c.

The *Eleanora* an Hofpital fhip came down took 70 fick.

This is all that is legible of the diary ending just a week before Allen's tragic death.

Supplementary are the two following letters. One from Mr. Sheftall written eleven years later, and one from Moses Allen to his brother-in-law Mr. Odingsell⁴ probably the last word received from him by his family.

Mr. Sheftall writes from

² Cockspur Island, below Savannah.

³ Tybee Island, at the mouth of the Savannah River.

⁴ Benjamin Odingsell was First Lieutenant of the Fourth company, Georgia Battalion—the Colonel being Lachlan McIntosh. (1776.)

SAVANNA IN GEORGIA, Feb. 4, 1790.

Capt. Joseph McLellan, of the Sloop Falmouth of Portland.

SIR:—The other evening, entering into conversation with you respecting a man whom I had known during the late war, on board the prison ship Nancy, commanded by one Samuel Tate, heavens, what was my astonishment to find that that miscreant was now living in the town of Portland in the state of New Hampshire. Surely the good people of that place cannot be acquainted with the character of the man, or 'tis impossible that he should be permitted to reside amongst Americans, much less allowed to carry on trade, as I suppose that to be the case.

I take the liberty of giving you a short detail of that man's conduct toward the poor prisoners, that were put on board his ship.

I was sent on board his ship on the 2nd of January 1779, with the Rev. Moses Allen, also a son of mine & several other gentlemen. Humanity must shudder at the thought of what immediately presented itself to view, which was nothing less than one of our poor countrymen, stretched out on the deck of the ship, in the agonies of death, without the least medical assistance, or even the smallest nourishment, when the hell-born monster, in order I have supposed to show us what we had to expect from his clemency, kept taunting the poor fellow, (who retained his senses to the last), in the following manner: "Why now, you are mighty bad—I am glad of it—I wish there was ten thousand of you in the same way, & your d—d rebel Congress too."

The next thing I took notice of that I thought material was the scanty allowance of provisions, with which we were served, which was two pints & a half & half a gill of rice, served out to each man, together with seven ounces of beef for each man for 24 hours.

Judge you what an allowance this,—not quite half a pound of rice a man for 24 hours & that not half boiled. This lasted for 12 days, when Captain Henry of the Foye,⁵ Man-of-War, who then acted as Commodore, Capt. Hyde Parker being at that time in Savannah, assisting in regulating their police, permitted us to write to town (as we then lay at Cockspur), for assistance to my friends, which I did & in a very pointed manner described the situation of the poor prisoners, well knowing that my letter would be read by the Commander-in-chief, who was Colo. Campbell,⁶ who was a man of humanity & a gentleman, although an enemy. My letter had the desired effect, & orders were given to send out 21 quarts of rice to

⁵ Probably the *Fowey* is meant.

⁶ This was Sir Archibald Campbell, of the 71st Highlanders; the same who was captured with the greater part of his regiment, aboard a British transport off Boston harbor, in June, 1776.

each mefs, confifting of fix men. This was fome relief to us poor prifoners, though it ferved our monfter of a captain alfo, for he was ftewart or commifary, & he took care that if we were benefited by the late order, he would be profited by it, for his gallon pot which we were ferved out of, only held five pints & a gill. This evil, though often complained of was never remedied, & this fon of malice permitted to enrich his coffers at the expenfe & blood of numbers of our worthy citizens, for from the fcanty allowance of provifions the poor fellows were induced to take large draughts of water, & that frequently brackifh, which brought on dyfenteries, and occafioned the death of many much better men than the wretch I am writing about.

Before taking my leave of this citizen (or alien) I must mention two or three acts of his, one, that I have feen him take a bottle of frefh water from one of our foldiers who was carrying it between decks to his companion, who the foldier faid was very ill, but this brute divested of every feeling of humanity, threw the bottle over board, & told the foldier if his companion wanted water, he must come & fetch it.

The poor man was accordingly brought up by two of his companions, when I held the cann to his mouth & the poor creature drank, I fuppofe a quart of water. The next morning the poor man was brought up dead from between decks.

The next thing that I would wifh to remind him of is, that the Rev. Mofes Allen, brother of the Rev. Thomas Allen of Pittffield, Mafs., being tired & fretted almoft to death (being a man of high fpirits), at the treatment we received from this hero of a captain, had endeavored to make his efcape from the fhip by fwimming, in which attempt he was unfortunately drowned. Some few days after he was picked up, & though there was a quantity of boards on board the fhip, which this man caufed his boats to pick up & bring on board, & I offered him two half Johannes out of three, that I had, for as many boards as would make a coffin for the poor parfon, & fome of the foldiers offered to make the coffin; yet this fellow refufed to let me have the boards, faying Rebels had no bufinefs with coffins.

To enumerate all that I know of this faid Capt. Samuel Tate, late mafter of the prifon fhip *Nancy*, in the fervice of the Britifh Tyrant, would take more of my time than I could wifh to beftow. Therefore, I fhall conclude with afsuring you, that you have my liberty to fhew this to anybody you pleafe, & to publifh it in the newfpaper of Portland or any other place you like.

I wifh you a good voyage and happy fight of your friends & family, & am, Sir,

Your obedient fervant,

MORDECAI SHEFTALL.

BETTY ALLEN

The other letter, addressed to Benjamin Odingsell, Esq., Gen. Lincoln's Camp, To the care of Major Habersham, Savannah, reads as follows.

ON BOARD PRISON SHIP NANCY, Jan'y. 20, 1779.

DEAR BROTHER:—Yours of the 16th, came to hand yesterday. It gives me great pleasure to hear of my family's arrival in Carolina, when I feared they were in the Enemy's Hand at Abercorn. I wrote fixe or six Letters to your Sifter & others; am surpris'd that none have reached them; however, I hope this may come safe, & you will as soon as possible tranfmit it to Mrs. Allen. I wrote to her but two or three days fince, whether it was permitted to pafs or not I cannot tell.

* * * * *

I believe Betty had better let out her negroes to a good mafter by the month. I fee no good Prospect of being exchanged foon, & may be confined many months, however, fhe is among friends & cannot fuffer. Beg her not to be troubled on my account. Captivity agrees with my conftitution much better than I could have expected. The mefs I belong to is indulged the ufe of the Cabin & our friends in Town fupply us with necefsaries not allowed in our daily Rations, fuch as bread, coffee, Tea, fugar, Rum & the like, fo that upon *theſe* confiderations, our fituation is very happy. By the kindnefs of friends I am alfo very well fupplied with Linnen, Stockings, &c. It would, therefore, be irreligious in her to murmur or repine. I hope better things of her. She will difcover faith & fortitude, fhe will be an example of patience & Refignation. The Chriftian graces may be made to appear more confpicious in adverfity than in Days of profperity.

If fhe has no Carolina Currency, She can get necefsaries for her felf & her little Companion upon Credit. I would not have her want for any Thing, but remember our late lofſes, & be frugal, I don't mean Stingy.

Remember me to Col. Elbert,⁷ Harris & all friends with you, too numerous to mention. I wifh they may think of my exchange. Defire Mrs. Allen to remember me kindly to all friends with her. * * * I have wrote Col. Harris, but have received no anfwer. Beg. Col. Roberts to write, he was once in the fame Predicament.

I am your affectionate friend & Brother,
MOSES ALLEN.

To Benjamin Odingsell, Efqr.

Elisha, the ninth child of Joseph and Betty, joined the volunteers from Northampton, who marched to offer aid at Bennington, but only

⁷ Colonel (afterwards Brigadier General) Samuel Elbert. (1743-1788.)

arrived after the battle, and were given the charge of the Hessian prisoners. So *Elisha*, also, though he did not belong to the regular troops, was to be counted on in the hour of need.

Solomon, the eighth child, was first a lieutenant, and later a major in the army.

At the time of the capture of André he was a lieutenant, and adjutant, on service on the lines not far from New York. His account of the removal of André to West Point, received from his own lips, will correct the errors of the other accounts, which have been given to the world. When the British spy was brought to the American post, Colonel Jameson ordered Lieutenant Allen to select a guard of nine men out of three hundred who were detached from West Point as a covering party to Colonel Weld's light-horse^s on the lines, sixty miles from West Point, and to carry the prisoner to Gen. Arnold, the commanding officer at West Point, with a letter from Jameson to Arnold. Just at night, September 23, 1780, he set out with his prisoner, who wore an old torn crimson coat, nankeen vest, and small clothes, old boots and flapped hat. André's arms being bound behind him, one of the soldiers held the strap, which was around his arm, and the guard on each side, as well as before and behind him, were ordered to run him through if he tried to escape. Lieutenant Allen riding behind, assured André of good treatment, and offered, if he should be tired, to dismount and give him his horse.

Having thus proceeded seven miles, with much cheerfulness on the part of the prisoner, an express overtook them with a letter from Jameson of this import, that as the enemy might have parties landed between them and West Point, Lieutenant Allen was ordered to leave the river road and take the prisoner immediately over east to Lower Salem, and deliver him to Captain Hoogland,^o commanding there a company of light-horse; then to take one of the guard and proceed with Jameson's

^s This is an error. The officer was Lieut.-Col. Levi Wells, of the 19th Connecticut Infantry, who was in command on the lines. See the Editor's *Crisis of the Revolution*.

^o Jeronimus Hoogland of Sheldon's (Second) Dragoons, of which Benjamin Tallmadge was Major.

letter to Arnold at West Point, sending the eight men back under the command of the sergeant.

The guard were unwilling to comply, as they wished to get back to West Point. They said there was no danger, and it was best to proceed; and André seconded the proposal. He thought the fear of a rescue was very idle. But Lieutenant Allen replied, like a soldier, "I must obey orders."

From this moment André appeared downcast.

The same night Allen delivered him to Hoogland, having travelled twenty miles.

In the morning of September 24, he proceeded with one of the guard to West Point, it being arranged that André should soon follow him; but the man being on foot, and the distance forty or fifty miles, he did not arrive till the forenoon of the 25th at Robinson's house, on the east side of the river, opposite West Point, the residence of Arnold and the quarters of the general officers.

Arnold was in the buttery¹⁰ eating, it being ten or eleven o'clock. On receiving the letter from Jameson he was thrown into great confusion. He, however, in a short time asked Lieutenant Allen upstairs to sit with Mrs. Arnold,¹¹ probably to keep him from an interview with the other officers, and precipitately left the house and fled.

Washington arrived at twelve o'clock on the same day from Hartford, and in the afternoon the treason was discovered by the arrival of the packet from Jameson for Washington. André was brought to headquarters the next day.

On the same day Allen was invited to dine at headquarters, and at dinner he heard General Knox remark, "What a very fortunate discovery this was! Without it we should all have been cut up!" To which Gen. Washington very gravely and emphatically replied:

"I do not call this a *fortunate* occurrence, but a remarkable *providence*."

¹⁰ An error. He was at breakfast with his staff, in the dining-room on the ground floor.

¹¹ An error. No historical authority for this statement is known.

After the war Major Allen was conspicuous in quelling Shays' Rebellion.

He afterward became an eminent Christian worker, preaching as an evangelist in Hampshire County, and later in Western New York, and died in New York City, in 1821. His sons, Solomon and Moses, of New York and Philadelphia, were very prosperous brokers, and they have left various worthy descendants,¹² among them our historian, the Rev. Solomon Clark.

Thomas, the fifth child (and the last of whom I undertake to speak), whose education was the subject of the earnest prayers already recorded, after studying theology in Northampton under Rev. Mr. Hooker, became the first minister of the Pittsfield church.

He was a man keenly interested in public affairs.

Among the papers of his brother Moses I find this interesting letter, written by Thomas the month before the fight at Lexington, giving to his brother in the South an account of what is now known as "Leslie's Retreat," the first armed resistance to British authority, occurring at the North Bridge in Salem, Feb. 26, 1775.

PITTSFIELD, MARCH 14th, 1775.

DEAR BROTHER:—I have not yet heard from you since you left Philadelphia, hope you have a Safe Return and found all well. Our good Mother was here 3 weeks in Feb'y. & I returned home with her & left all well at Northampton. We had a daughter Elizabeth born Feb'y. 8. Brother Jonathan is Captain of the Minute Company of Northampton & was at Boston when I was at Northampton viewing the Regulars. We expect hot work here in May. General Gage has ordered Shackles Made for the Rebels. But he must catch them before he puts them on. Our Provincial Congress meets again the 22nd of this Instant when we shall immediately raise an Army of 20 thousand Men.

Connecticut Assembly have agreed to raise 10 Thousand immediately after our Congress fits, if we desire it to which time they have adjourned their house. By the Beginning of April we shall have an Army to take the field as large as our necessities call for & will undoubtedly be collected then if we should have no more favorable news from home which none expect. We are all vigorously preparing

¹² Mr. Theodore L. Allen, Secretary of the Berkshire Life Insurance Co. of Pittsfield, Mass., is a great-grandson of Rev. Solomon Allen.

for war; we have lately purchased 21,800£ worth of Ammunition which is stowed in the province, a part of which lately came in & was lodged near Salem.)

General Gage having information of it detached a Regiment from Castle William Sabbath before last in Transports to go & Seize upon it. They landed at Marblehead & Marched to Salem in time of Divine Service. The People all fled to Arms furrounded them, disappointed them & turned them back ashamed without taking any of their Lives. As you will see in the public Papers. They are disappointed in every plot. A plot has lately come to light black as hell. 300 Dollars have been granted by General Gage to enlist negroes in a private manner. Their negro officers have been appointed. The Design was as soon as General Gage should strike some blow they were to murder their Masters & fly to his Standard. We find 300 had enlisted. The chiefs we committed to Gaol.

I tremble for our Southern provinces, where the Negroes are so Numerous. They are no doubt this Moment at work among you. 300 Negroes in Connecticut have been just now discovered to have armed themselves with long Daggers and have confessed the plot. O Carolina look out sharp. We have Men enough this Way to carry on the War for a great while. I fear we are too bare as to Money. We hope our Southern Neighbors will help us. Money is the Sinews of War. Col. Hancock and Mr. — (illegible) are now in Virginia Deliberating. Two Gentlemen are to set out from this place this Day by the Appointment of our Congress to Quebec & see what they are about there. We hear there is a raising there to come upon the back of us. But we don't fear from that Quarter. We are all alive this way, we are moving every Way for our safety. We have purchased a large Quantity of Provisions for our Army. Cannon we have laid up in store. We are exercising Soldiers every week. Do let me know what you are about. O Dear Brother exert yourself in this glorious cause & pray for us. I preached at Northampton when I was down & the Tories absent in the Afternoon. The General infits upon my going Chaplain in our Army. I have provided myself with a good flintlock & Bayonet. General Gage is watched, he cannot make one movement without our knowledge. The — are filled with perplexity & with Impatience. Many of them think they have been shut up long enough in Boston; but they must tarry longer yet, & there is like to be more room for their patience. The — in the Country are desperate being defeated in all their Machinations. The Tory Ministers have at length got woke up on the side of their —. I shall write to you often, I hope you will to me. Brother Eliza set up his Trade at Northampton. I wish you could find some one that would take some hats off his hands and let him have Money in return. We have not thought of flinching one hair's breadth this way. I hope you will not your way. May the Good heaven be on our side & we shall be safe. I have enclosed our Proclamation for a fast this Week for your reading.

I am, Dear Brother you'll fee in great hafte with fervent Wifhes for your
prosperity, your moft Affectionate Brother,

THOMAS ALLEN.

Mrs. Allen's Salutations. Pardon the numerous Errata of this Epiftle.

As chaplain in the army, Thomas Allen acquired the title of the
"fighting parson" at the Battle of Bennington.

Learning of the fact that Burgoyne was marching on Bennington,
he, without hesitation, rallied his people in the "meeting-house," and
made them a speech which impressed itself on the memory of a genera-
tion.

"All of you who will go to meet the enemy follow me!" and
away the parson went in his parochial sulky, on what he calls his "tour
to Bennington," gathering volunteers all along the route.

As preparations for the battle began on the morning of Aug. 16,
and the adjutant was beginning to place his squadrons in the field, Par-
son Allen said to him, "We will do our fighting in good time, but first
we will join in prayer!"

Then went up amid the Berkshire men commanded by Lieutenant
Colonel Rossiter, such a prayer, from the lips that Betty Allen had
trained, as inspired the men with true courage and strong faith that the
God of Armies was with them. Poetic tradition hath it that this
prayer was offered from a platform of boards laid over drum-heads, in
the centre of a hollow square of troops.

When the order came to advance, Parson Allen, moved by a sense
of duty, came boldly to the front and demanded the surrender of the
Tories. The reply was: "There's Parson Allen; let's pop him!" Bul-
lets flew about, but did not hit him. "Now, Joe," said the pious parson,
"give me a musket. You load and I'll fire." So, reducing his preaching
to practice,

The parson oped the battle,
First by prayer and then by ball.

The history of that day is too well known for repetition here.

Parson Allen was once asked by his son if he supposed he ever killed a man.

"My son, I don't know, but I *guess* I did. I remember that near the close of the day at Bennington, I observed a flash behind a bush at our left, which seemed to take effect upon our men. I raised my musket and fired at the bush, and I *put out the flash!*"

A pair of large square white-glass bottles from the panniers of a Hessian surgeon, carried by Parson Allen from the field, after their contents had been administered to the wounded, are still preserved in the Pittsfield branch of the family.

Years have passed, but Berkshire treasures,
On the tongue and in the heart,
'Mid the memories of the battle
Parson Allen's valiant part.

And amid the forms that history
Clusters round that battle-field,
Firm for freedom, self-reliant,
Finding still their God their shield,
Stands the Parson on the drum-head,
Stands the Parson in the fight.
Reverent trust in Great Jehovah
Zeal for manhood, and the right!

MARY A. H. EMERSON.

AMHERST, MASS.



